

Text Structures 2 – Answers

1. The Age of the Dinosaurs

Dinosaurs existed about 250 million years ago to 65 million years ago. This era is broken up into three periods known as the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous periods. The Triassic Period lasted for 35 million years from 250-205 million years ago. Planet Earth was a very different place back then. All the continents were united to form one huge land mass known as Pangaea. The Jurassic Period was the second phase. The continents began shifting apart. The time scale for this famous period is from 205 to 138 million years ago. The Cretaceous Period was the last period of the dinosaurs. It spanned a time from 138 million to about 65 million years ago. In this period the continents fully separated. However, Australia and Antarctica were still united.

Chronological Order

2. Vicious Predators

The Cretaceous Period was filled with dangerous predators, but two of the most feared hunters were the tyrannosaurs rex and the velociraptor. The tyrannosaurs rex was one of the largest carnivores to ever walk the Earth. He was 20 feet tall and weighed seven tons. His jaws could crush down with 3,000 lbs. of force, enough to smash the bones of his prey. The velociraptor was very small compared to rex. Raptors only stood three feet tall and were seven feet long, weighing merely 35 pounds. But the velociraptor was fast. Scientists think that raptors could run 24 miles per hour and turn on a dime. Both dinosaurs used their jaws to kill prey, but the raptor had a secret weapon: a retractable toe claw that he pulled out like a knife to slash at his prey. Both dinosaurs had eyes on the front of their heads, which helped them track prey. If these two dinosaurs had fought, it would be difficult to say which would win; however since raptors died over ten million years before the first tyrannosaurs was born, scientists don't believe such a fight ever occurred.

Compare and Contrast



3. Creating a Faux Dinosaur Fossil

Materials: plaster of Paris, mixing bowl, large spoon or other mixing utensil, sand paper bowl or cup, objects to fossilize, paint

Look for or collect an object to fossilize. This can be anything from a plastic toy dinosaur to a leaf. Pour about an inch of sand into a paper bowl or cup. Press the object into the sand. Do not bury it. Mix the plaster of Paris according to the manufacturer's directions. Parents should do this step for their children. Pour the plaster onto the sand. Let it set overnight. Once the plaster has set remove it from the paper bowl or plate. You may need to peel or tear the paper away.

Remove or brush off the sand and object to reveal the fossilized imprint. Optional: Paint if desired.

Sequence

4. What Happened to the Dinosaurs?

There are many theories about why the dinosaurs vanished from the planet. One theory that many people believe is that a gigantic meteorite smashed into the Earth. Scientists believe that the meteorite was very big and that the impact may have produced a large dust cloud that covered the Earth for many years. The dust cloud may have caused plants to not receive sunlight and the large plant eaters, or herbivores, may have died off, followed by the large meat eaters, or carnivores. This theory may or may not be true, but it is one explanation as to why these giant reptiles no longer inhabit the Earth.

Cause and Effect

5. Fossil Mishap

The fossil record can give us large amounts of knowledge, but there are many other ways that the fossil record is incomplete or misleading. For example, the brontosaurus is a type of dinosaur that never really existed. Many people still believe in the brontosaurus today, but the “brontosaurus” is actually the body of an apatosaurus with the head of a camarasaurus. The brontosaurus was made up from these two mismatched fossils. That’s why it is important to think critically about information that people tell you, even if it’s information you find on a book or in a worksheet. Keep these problems in mind when studying fossil records to come to conclusions about dinosaurs and their lifestyles.

Problem and Solution

6. Dino the Dinosaur

One day Dino the Dinosaur decided to go for a walk to the watering hole. It was a sunny day and the sky was blue and clear. Dino was thinking about his girlfriend Dina when he saw a pack of wild lizards and animals running through the plains in a frenzy. Dino tried to ask the critters why they were running, but they just kept running. Dino scratched his dinosaur head and continued walking toward the watering hole. Soon after, Dino heard a loud thumping noise like the slow beat of a drum. The earth shook and fruit fell from the trees, but Dino was so deep in thought over his girl Dina that he didn’t even notice. The thumping grew louder and louder as Timmy the Tyrannosaurs Rex approached Dino. Dino kept thinking about his girl Dina until the moment Timmy ate him.

Chronological

